Red Action

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Arrests followed scuffles,when members of the militant A.F.A. attempted to stop the B.N.P. from entering the hall." CITY LIMITS.August 30th.

On Wed 22nd August the B.N.P. held an election meeting in Weavers Field School, Bethnal Green. Both the Militant and the S.W.P. mobilised to occupy the school at 7pm despite knowing in advance that the police would only open the doors after the arrival of the B.N.P. at 8.15pm.

Naturally this tactic was of no practical value and was deliberately selected to allow only verbal combat. As on other occassions when a confrontation did occur their supporters played the alloted role (and seemed for the most part happy to do so) of cheer leaders or neutral observers. When the B.N.P. finally showed and approached the visibly apprehensive pickett, there was none of their usual swagger. For where they marched 40 members of Anti-Fascist Action cheerfully followed.In the presence of the police we were denied entrance to this public meeting by BNP.

stewards and a brief brawl ensued. The organisations who had stood and watched immediately organised a public meeting with speeches liberally peppered with blood-curdling promises. An elusive rumour of a Fascist gang armed with pick-axe handles in the vicinity caused the ripples of applause to be replaced with ripples of panic. The locals present were not visibly impressed. Tower Hamlets is a solid working class area. In the recent local elections 12 Tory candidates amassed only 500 votes between them. The borough also has the highest ratio of racial attacks in the entire country. In the latest election one B.N.P. candidate got almost 300 votes on his own. The success of the far right is testamony to the complete inadequacy of the far left. Among black, Asian and White working class kids they are totally devoid of any credibility. The situation will continue to deteriorate until as a very first step the constituency is properly contested and just as important be seen to be contested.

The S.W.P./Militant might continue to pretend that they actually have a battle-plan but stripped down it is exposed as nothing but the disjointed antics of the indifferent, the incompetent and the inept.

At least the S.W.P. in Bethnal Green put a pickett on the right school unlike their counter-parts in Enfield 4 days earlier who contrived to call a counter demonstration at the wrong station. Informed weeks in advance by A.F.A. among others, that the N.F. planned to march from Southbury Station. They rallied their supporters at Enfield station instead. They then complained in their paper Socialist Worker' that the police "penned 200 Anti-Fascists in a cul de sac for two hours." They omitted to mention that (despite vehement protests from A.F.A they deliberately choose the cul de sac.

Having admitted that their intention was to get within "shouting distance of the Fascists"(!) there is the possibility that in future in the absence of a convienlent cul de sac the Revolutionary vanguard will be asked to turn up with their own crash barriers.

PROTECTION RACKET

In all the speech-making and phrasemongering over the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, there has been one small word that must have been in everyone's mind - yet was never spoken by politician, TV pundit or newspaper columnist. It has to rank alongside the most remarkable ommisions of our time. See if you can spot the missing word in Mrs Thatcher's masterpiece of hypocrisy:

"Iraq has violated and occupied the territory of a country which is a full member of the UN. This is totally unacceptable. If it is allowed to endure, there would be many other small nations which could never feel safe."

Many other small nations such as - PANAMA! There too, a dictator ran a country with the utmost cooperation from the West until he started to show too much independence and from an ally and friend paid $100,000 a year by the CIA, was suddenly discovered to have been a gangster all along and had to be invaded. The US invasion of Panama has been documented as having caused 1,000 civilian deaths, while by contrast, even a British Embassy official has said that Iraqi troops had been "pretty scrupulous" in avoiding civilian casualties. Obviously, there must be some other difference in the eyes of politicians and the media between the Iraqis taking over a small 'independent' country and the US doing the same.

Yet it was only recently that we endured the remarkably unedifying sight of British ministers being humble to Iraqi government touts who sent back the excuted body of a British citizen with taunts and insults. It was known to all that in Iraq, Saddam Hussein's regime had attempted genocide on its own Kurdish population, killing 5,000, using chemical weapons that are universally condemned for their barbarity. Despite all that, Britain's response to the Bazoft execution was distinctly muted and British companies were exhorted to pay no attention to the matter and get on with the business of drumming up as much trade with the despotic regime of Sadaam Hussein as they could. The rich pickings offered by that country's oil-financed reconstruction after the war with Iran were too great to be resisted. Iraq's victory then was presented as a victory also of the West - quite rightly, since Iraq couldn't have won without the military and financial backing of the western powers, principally the US. Iraq was still a 'friend'. Wanting compliant client states in the Middle East to ensure their own 'vital interests', (which are of course the opposite of those of the indigenous populations), western countries were prepared to dismiss the fact that the regimes they supported were staffed by feudal barbarians specialising in totalitarian control, torture and imprisonment. At least they were our feudal barbarians.

Iraq has long been a military dictatorship, ruled by the brutal leadership of a single man. It is known to torture and kill its political opponents on a scale perhaps as large as that of any country in the world. In recent history it started a war that cost over a million dead. It is known to have slaughtered thousands of its own population using chemical weapons and has threatened to wipe out the population of another country in a similar fashion. Despite this, Britain and the US have maintained to the very minute of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that it is vital to remain on polite and "diplomatic" terms with Sadaam Hussein. They, together with France and W. Germany (who supplied the materials for the manufacture of poison gas) have supplied Iraq with the military hardware and training that maintained the dictatorship in power and enables it to repress its own dissident population and prosecute its wars with the aim of becoming a regional superpower. They have emphasised the need to maintain and promote trade with this country by all available means, although this has certainly had the effect of strengthing the totalitarian regime. The week after the sentence passed on Bazoft, the US lent Iraq $500 million, part of its largest agricultural aid package in the world.

Not only Iraq has benefited from this soft spot for murderous Arab dictatorships. For example, there is Saudi Arabia, an absolute monarchy hanging on at the end of the twentieth century, where the king rules by royal decree and which according to Amnesty International, has tortured and killed 700 of its political opponents during the past six years. All political parties and Trade Unions are banned. The kingdom has no penal code or constitution. Detainees are held in solitary confinement without access to lawyers or families and without charge or trial. Heads and hands are publicly chopped off (including recently those of 16 Kuwaiti political prisoners) to encourage the rest. Women are publicly stoned to death.

George Bush then says:

"The integrity of Saudi Arabia, its freedom, are very, very important to the United States."

The freedom Bush is talking about isn't the freedom inside the country because there isn't any - nor does the US want to see any. A democratic regime would threaten the freedom of the United States to buy the Saudi's oil at the price it wants to pay - that's the 'freedom' Bush is talking about. Of course, the money paid to the Saudi "royal Family" for the oil is then re-invested in Western banks and industries without ever being seen by the people of the country themselves. As for Britain's attitude to such a patently vile regime, that nice Prince Charles paid a state visit there last year. Other "friends of the West" such as Jordan and until the recent events, Kuwait, run their regimes in a similar fashion. It is now the case that the US and Britain are prepared to go to war to 'protect' what is possibly the only regime in that part of the world more repressive and brutal than Iraq itself - Saudi Arabia.

Sanctions were imposed within hours of the invasion - the same sanctions that couldn't be made to work in the case of South Africa. And in defence of what? - Kuwait, a tiny parcel of land created by the stroke of a British diplomat's pen in 1922 to no-one's satisfaction except that of Britain who occupied Iraq as a colony at the time. Kuwait is another feudal regime where 60% of its inhabitants are totally disenfranchised and without rights and where the same family of bandits that Britain installed as rulers then were in power when the Iraqi tanks moved in.

What then, is the difference between the US invading Panama and Iraq invading Kuwait? The difference clearly, is that it is alright to invade enemies of the US who threaten 'vital interests' but a crime against humanity when enemies invade our 'friends'.

The invasion and military occupation of Saudi Arabia reflects the declining economic status of the US in terms of its greatest rival and creditor, Japan. American forces are now sitting on top of around 50% of the world's oil reserves and the Saudi "Royal Family" are more blatantly than ever puppets with American hands up their backs. Control of the world's fuel supply is why the US moved such powerful military forces into the area so quickly. Saddam provided the pretext, but war with Iraq is a secondary matter. Direct military control over the world's most productive oil-fields is the real key. The Americans are now in a perfect position to blackmail its economic rivals by controlling oil prices and supplies world wide. It is no coincidence that the country which is most susceptible to blackmail in this form is America's biggest commercial rival - Japan. Already other countries, especially Japan and W. Germany, are being "invited" to contribute to the costs of The US invasion. These countries will be only too aware that they will soon be "invited" to pay a lot more for their oil if they decline this offer they can't refuse.

Military might is now being used as a direct substitute for economic power in the competition between the world's two strongest economic nations.

Smaller nations are merely pawns in this larger game. A 'friend' of the West is a country prepared to be useful strategically or economically to the powerful capitalist systems that dominate the world's economy. Iraq for example, has been valued as a regime, however nasty, that curbs islamic fundamentalism as represented by Iran and Syrian militarism. The oil of the Middle East is a "vital interest" of the West, and someone was needed as the West's policeman in the area: and as we all know, a nasty, corrupt policeman is often the most effective. If totalitarian regimes such as Iraq or Saudi Arabia have the oil and are prepared to exercise power in the region in accordance with Western interests, then they are our "friends" no matter how disgusting their politics may be (the same goes for dictators in Central and South America such as Noriega so long as they toe the line). If firms in this country can sell them western technology, much of it military, (such as the notorious super-gun) then every courtesy must be extended to these torturers and murderers so that profits can be made. However there are strict limits to this courtesy. The minute Western interests are perceived to be threatened and these ex-colonials become uppity and forget who's really in charge of their economies, they are discovered with bewildering speed to be 'enemy' regimes - new Hitlers, dictators, mad mullahs and all the rest of it and direct military intervention follows. It is apparently always the British Foreign Office and the US State Department who are the last to find out the real nature of their former friends.

CRASH COURSE!

A group of Red Action members from the Hatfield branch have recently been making a number of app-earances in the local magistrate's court. Regular readers should not be alarmed, Red Action's reputation with the constabulary for fair play has not been compromised. We have in fact been acting as lay representatives for defendants who either won't or can't pay their Poll Tax in hearings where the council has been applying for liability orders. The original plan of councils around the country was to present magistrates with computer print outs of around 500 names at a time and have these rubber-stamped in a five minute operation. However, taking advantage of the fact that all defendants must be granted individual hearings if they turn up on the day they are summonsed (the right existed under the rates system but was hardly ever used), we have managed to restrict magistrates to processing around one case per hour. In practice this restricts them to issuing approximately 50 summonses per court day - a serious setback for the council when they have so few court dates available to them. Naturally, in a magistrates court we have had to put up with what cannot be described as anything other than a lot of shit. Magistrates so far have processed a liability order (with costs) against a mentally impaired man, despite notes from his GP, the Citizen's Advice Bureau and a Hospital and against a youth whom the court accepted had no fixed abode (such persons are supposed to be exempt in law from the Poll Tax). Presumably bailiffs are going to be sent in to confiscate his cardboard box. The point is however that by using these delaying tactics and in the process frequently reducing the court to a circus - they have never before been faced with cases where people are politically organised - the council has been hamstrung in its efforts to actually get the money out of people's pockets. There are 8,000 summonses to be issued in this area, and at the present rate it will take a hundred court days to hear them all by which time there will be many more people who have stopped paying. More than this, it is the universal reaction of the people who have stood before the magistrates and argued their cases with our support, that they emerge with a new, bitter and undying contempt for the administration of "justice" in such places. As a crash course in political education for ordinary working class people, the Poll Tax hearings have no rival.

BLIND BEAUTY

"A spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of communism". These are the opening words of the Communist Manifesto drawn up by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and first published as the political platform of the Communist League, a working men's association, in 1848.

In 1990, 140 years on, there is no basis for such optimism and we, the working class, appear to be right back where we started. Right wing ideologies not only celebrate the end of Marxism, but some even suggest that the implosion in the East and the collapse of the bureaucratic dictatorships may in fact signal the end of history. That is, end end to competing ideologies. The end of the cold war necessarily means the end to speculating about any improvements to or alternatives to capitalism.

They would, on the one hand, like to convince you that the writings of Marx and Engels, the theoretical rather than the actual basis for socialism has been invalidated. But none of them are quite as convincing when they suggest that the actual basis for class conflict has vanished as well; the existence of the working class itself.

What today they are chiefly concerned with is setting in concrete the central concept that as regards the "emancipation of the working class" a Stalinist type dictatorship is the logical and inevitable outcome of any and every effort to achieve a fairer distribution of wealth from rich to poor.

This is because as Karl Marx himself explained they,

"shudder at the very idea that a common workman should be wicked enough to claim any higher destiny than that of enriching his master and natural superior. He wants his workman not only to remain a miserable drudge, overworked and underpaid, but like every other slaveholder, he wants him to be a cringing, servile broken-hearted, morally prostrate, reliously humble drudge. With him a strike is a blasphemy, a slave revolt, a signal of social cataclysm".

As they well understand without any vision, explanation or analysis, strikes and industrial action are not just the natural result of the irreconcilable differences between capital and labour, but instead stand condemned as an immoral aberration and a (futile) attack on the natural order itself. Without any insight, our history from Spartacus to the Paris Commune, from 1917 to the miners' strike appears to be merely a series of disconnected events.

If that is how the hard-line capitalist likes to see things, is it not curious that their polar opposites, the hardline communists, were overseers to a similar system where independent trade unions were unknown, industrial action regarded as blasphemy or sabotage, a revolt against the natural order and the dictatorship of the proletariat etc, though both adversaries were agreed that this communism was the genuine article. If the Soviet Union was indeed the ideas of Karl Marx made flesh, if socialism is the equivalent merely to state intervention in economic and social life, socialism reduced to planned production and economic planning given priority over human rights, then for the working class East or West, it is not a stark and vivid choice between opposing and mutually exclusive ideologies, but merely similar ones incorporated into different economic systems.

So over the past 70 years between the propaganda of the capitalists and the complementary collaboration of Stalinists recidivists and repeat offenders, any alternative working class vision of a different social order has been almost entirely eclipsed.

During the recent CP Congress, thousands of delegates assembled in the Soviet union to discuss the future of the party and the 'workers state'. A breakdown of the delegates revealed that 70% were bureaucrats and state officials (with a vested interest in maintaining the system), the remainder divided between intellectuals, other odds and sods, while a generous 3% was alloted to the **workers and peasants!** What a gigantic fraud! This communism was at best a caricature, a carcass with all the vital organs , indeed the very essence, of Marx removed. "The emancipation of the working class must be achieved by the working classes themselves". This was the first sentence in the rules written for the First International by Marx and this is also the first principle of his life's work. In comparison the whole content of Das Capital is secondary being merely the economic basis for the proposition.

The problems, controversies and imaginative interpretations associated with another famous phrase, the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is directly linked to the concept of the self-emancipation of the proletariat. The difficulty for many 'Marxists' is grasping the self-explanatory class meaning of the former because they themselves are unable to even conceive of the possibility of the latter.

Similarly, a literal adherence to the principle of self-emancipation would instantly dissolve most of the sects or groups that do and have existed, the vast majority middle class in character, composition and appeal. Marx did not invent the principle of self-emancipation - it probably arose spontaneously out of the facts of class mistrust, wherever the pattern of class struggle enforced its lessons.

While Red Action's 'bigotry' on the subject of class composition is well known, relatively speaking; Marx and Engels had equally strong views on the subject. A good introduction to their overall view is provided by an open letter published by Engels in 1890, against a faction of left wing students, intellectuals in the German Social Democratic party,

"let them understand that their academic education which in any case needs a basic critical self-review - gives them no officer's commision with a claim to a corresponding post in the party; that in our party everyone must serve in the ranks; that ports of responsibility in the party will be won not simply by literary talent and theoretical knowledge, but what is required is thorough familiarity with the conditions of party struggle and seasoning with forms, tested personnel, reliability and sound character and finally willing allotment in the ranks of the fighters - in short that they, the academically educated people have far more to learn from the workerss all in all than the latter have to learn from them."

This letter touches on or suggests some of the major tendencies arising out of the entrance of these academically trained people into a movement dominated by a working class membership and built by working class activists. In 1879 Marx and Engels attacked a tendency in German Social Democracy which argued that the Social Democratic Party should **not** be a one-sided workers' party but an all-sided party of "all men imbued with the love of humanity" and not be lowered to "a one-sided struggle of the industrial workers in their own interest". In short, concluded Marx and Engels, their viewpoint amounts to this,

"...the working class of itself is incapable of its own emancipation. for this purpose it must place itself under the leadership of 'educated and propertied bourgeois' who alone possess the 'time and opportunity' to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers."

The de facto domination of the party in the Reichstag group by educated bourgeois opportunists was precisely what Marx and especially Engels after Marx's death, continued to attack as the immediate manifestation of the 'rotten spirit' that permeated the party leadership. All during the decade before his death Engles inveighed against the "schoolmarmish snobbery of our so-called educated people" as the great danger to the party reiterating the warning that this destroyed "the principle of self emancipation". **"It is always these people who consider their bit of education as absolutely indispensible thanks to which the workers are not to emancipate themselves but gain salvation through it; the emancipation of the working class is to them possible only by the 'educated' bourgeois philistine; how else are the poor uneducated workers to take care of themselves?"**

The party in Germany, Engels wrote to an American comrade,

"with the arrogant Germans who want to play schoolmaster and commendor in one and make the natives disgusted with learning even the best things from them".

As with other social strata the question marks over the students was not only their revolutionary consistency and stamina, but in particular their potential as an ally of the working class movement. Engles again noted the lack of stamina demonstrated by this strata during the revolution of 1848-49 in which he himself took part.

"In general during the whole campaign the students showed themselves to be malcontent, nervous young gentlemen who always wanted to be let in on the operation plans, but complained of wounded feet and grumbled if the campaign did not offer all the amenities of a vacation trip."

The purpose of recalling this litany of abuse though clearly it is of contemporary relevance, is not to 'justify our bigotry', but to demonstrate the undeniable link between the issue of class composition and political reformism.

In Germany in 1890 the problems were how to integrate the academically educated into the ranks of a working class movement, 100 years on in Britain, the problem is the exact reverse, the entrance and acceptance of the working class into the ranks of the academically educated 'revolutionary' movement itself dominated by middle class members and built by middle class activists. They justify and excuse the contradiction by claiming that only the students have the 'time and opportunity' to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers! The attraction of a party like the SWP for reform minded intellectuals is the absence of any progressive parliamentary party with enough courage, integrity and consistency to retain their loyalty. Instead they set up their own operation which does not cut themselves loose from their own class but instead works effortlessly to cut revolutionary Marxism away from its working class pedigree and foundations. As a result today, instead of the 'reds' we have the 'pinky respectables'!

Certainly within the history of the International Working Men's Association, the question of class composition and the principle of self-emancipation aroused high emotion. As one right-wing historian noted, "no idea, without excepting perhaps, their hatred of capital, has entered more into their heads and hearts". The principle of self-emancipation figured not only in the rules of the international but also on the back of the individual's membership card.

One very important overall feature of the attitude taken by Marx and Engels is that "it requires a fight on two fronts". At almost every point that was the rejection of inter-related mistakes. If on the one hand some in the movement welcomed intellectuals uncritically and without sifting scrutiny, there was also the opposite error of others who proposed an exclusionary policy of a "manual workers only" movement. Marx recognised that there was a role for politically educated individuals who had broken with their own class in the workers' movement, but it had to be a limited one. However he poured scorn on the "professional" proletarians (real or alleged) who evinced his birthright as proof of political and moral superiority. Like everything else it was really a question of balance, workers to one-workers, like putting pepper on soup, though naturally it was more important for the make-up of the membership in general and branches in particular.

It was not until 1872 largely due to the antics of the American section 12, home to every crackpot fad, its membership overwhelmingly middle-class, professional and intellectual that caused the issue to be taken up constitutionally. If the International was to be

"England is used as the chief illustration in the development of my theoretical ideas "because" the country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed the image of its own future"
KARL MARX

working class in character. What did this mean in concrete regulations? As a result the general council adopted these guidlines written by Marx.

"...the general council recommends that in future there be permitted no new American section of which two-thirds do not consist of wage-labourers."

The choice of the fraction of two-thirds was of course arbitary, the intention was to maintain the proletarian proportion above a mere majority and definitely less than 100% which would have meant exclusionism (4 months later the rule was amended to make it applicable to all sections).

The principle of self-emancipation has often been praised as a democratic conception, people taking their destiny in hand. This is true enough. What is overlooked is that this principle underlines the revolutionary (literally subversive, overturning nature of Marx's view of socialism). Nothing is more revolutionary in its thrust than this principled rejection of all gracious patronage from above'. All the more so because it is double edged, pointed against both the established powers and against all proponents of socialism from above. So if Marxism can be briefly defined as the theory and practice of working class revolution, it is equally the theory and practice of the self-emancipation of the working class. Only a movement looking to class struggle from below could be a genuinely revolutionary movement. For the last 70 years we have been first blinded and then repelled by the proponents of the idea that a new social order will be handed down to the suffering people by a revolutionary band or party, or alternatively suppport for a movement from below only to implement a socialism from above. In 1858 Marx wrote,

"In the struggle of the working class to free itself from wage slavery it cannot be repeated too often that everything depends on the working class itself. The simple question is, can the workers fit themselves by education, organisation, cooperation and self-imposed discipline to take control of the productive forces and manage industry in the interests and for the benefit of society. That is all there is to it."

Can we fit ourselves? Marx was under no starry-eyed illusion about the working class as it was then or as it is now. He simply proposed a different goal to that of the elitists whose single function is to point a finger at the backward nature of the class, suggesting of course that the remedy is held in their own educated heads. If self-emancipation is the first principle of Marx, then it is also the flagship of Red Action. Even in our own brief history, individuals have been attracted by Red Action's working class orientation who also felt that only they were academically equipped to fill the resulting intellectual void!

After a split in 1994 and the subsequent collapse of branches outside London, we realised that we were simply not ready, the launch of Red Action had been premature. Up to now we have never 'touted' for membership. Those that have come to us have had few illusions about the nature of revolutionary politics in general or Red Action in particular. Our policies on anti-fascism and the war in Ireland have also had a self-regulatory effect on recruitment. In the intervening years, while others chattered endlessly and sought publicity in pointless propaganda, Red Action for the most part stayed in the background. We fought a little but thought a lot.

If to remain loyal to and fulfil the concept of self-emancipation the class composition of the revolutionary organisation was regarded by Marx and workers themselves as vital in 1872, it is surely no less important in 1990. A serious revolutionary organisation must be working class in instinct, character, composition and appeal. It must be built in a democratic manner from the bottom up rather than what is almost uniformly fashionable today, by decree by an enlightened elite from the top down. It is only in this way that the initiative, vitality and imagination of our class can be harnessed to facilitate the development of 'organic intellectuals' who would articulate and rationalise the potential for dominance of the class from which they themselves have sprung. In this way do we the working class fit ourselves for 'political dominion'. To achieve this and reverse all previous trends it will be necessary to implement a similar discriminatory policy on recruitment as that adopted by our revolutionary ancestors in 1872. In short the revolutionary workers organisation must be the living embodiment of the ultimate aim. That as one old boy said, "is all there is to it". As we enter a new decade, a couple of things are crystal clear, one is that there is no alternative but to start again, and that this time there can be no short-cuts.

Should Red Action accept the challenge then the prospect for the return of the "spectre" almost immediately becomes less remote.

G O'Halloran

"I pondered all these things, and how men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that that fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out to be not what they meant and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name." WILLIAM MORRIS.

LETTERS

segregation

At present the Northern Ireland Office is attempting to enforce a policy of integration of loyalist and republican prisoners. This is the only prison in Ireland where such a situation exists. Over these past few months prisoners from both sides have been engaged in a protest campaign against this ludicrous policy.

A Chara,

I would like through your paper to highlight the situation of forced integration in Crumlin Road jail. I hope you can give me the space to explain the present situation and therefore give your readers an idea of what we as remand prisoners have to endure in the jail. I would like to make it clear to your readers that, as remand prisoners, we have not been convicted of any offence.

The tension has increased in the past month when 4 loyalists attacked a republican inmate going to a visit. As a result of this incident the republican in question had to be taken to the prison hospital where he received treatment for cuts and bruises to his face and upper body. After receiving treatment, he proceeded with his visit and on seeing the condition of their son, his parents were visibly appalled that incidents like this can, and all too frequently do, happen. This incident was carried in some newspapers and news bulletins on television. The NIO also issued a statement but watered down the situation to diffuse the situation.

Since this occurred there have been several such incidents. Two loyalists were injured and another republican has been set upon. The tension in the jail is at an all time high with inmates asking one another who's next to be attacked.

The past 6 or 7 months have seen incidents like the aforementioned occurring on a regular basis - only a few have been publicised. Up until now we have seen the prisoner on the receiving end being punched and kicked, but how long, must one ask, until we see weapons being used e.g. snooker cues, brushes and toothbrushes with razor blades embedded? If these items do raise their ugly heads, there is no doubt whatsoever that a prisoner will end up dead!

Before it gets this far, I would like your readers to put pressure on the NIO by wholeheartedly supporting the segregation protest and I would hope that through this letter your readers will ask the question, "why do they not end forced integration?" when after all, in the North of Ireland, our schools are segregated, some of our towns and villages are segregated and in our cities, where a nationalist housing estate might overlook a unionist estate, they build walls between the respective estates therefore keeping the people segregated. Yet still, in this jail, where the NIO claim the warring factions exist, they see no reason to segregate.

In mise,
Republican Socialist Prisoner
A Wing, Crumlin Road Jail

For more info contact: SF, pow dept, 51/55 Falls Rd, Belfast Or, IRSP, pow dept, 392 Falls Rd, Belfast, BT12 4EH.

p.o.w.

A Chara

Let me first of all offer my sincere gratitude to all who assist in the support group on behalf of myself and all the Republican Socialist Prisoners. This support, moral and financial, is most appreciated, the money which Red Action donates has helped to eradicate some problems and minimise others, e.g. bus fares to the prison, parcels, political books to futher education in the struggle, clothing etc.

Comrades, as you may be aware there are other Republican Socialist POWs incarcerated in British jails in their struggle against British rule in the six counties.

These comrades have given a lot of commitment and dedication to the republican Socialist movement.

As our struggle for liberation and the building of a socialist republic continues, it would be fair to calculate that our numbers in prison will continue to rise in the coming years and we implore all socialist activists to support us in every way possible.

To conclude, I once again extend the sincere thanks and appreciation of myself and all RSPs to Red Action in the helping of setting up support groups.

In Comradeship and Solidarity
B.Gallagher H4 Long Kesh.

EXCELLENT

Dear Comrades!

Some time ago I sent you a letter stating that our autonomous info-bookshop ZAPATA would like to distribute your excellent paper. When I was in England some time ago (February), I bought copies of your paper (no 54) to take back and sell in the shop. We have now sold them all, and these people who bought them are asking for more!

Hopieg to hear from you soon

the ZAPATA collective
ONLY ONE SOLUTION THE ARMED REVOLUTION
Zapata
Blegardsgade
Denmark

HO HUM!

Dear Comrades

Why does a group thats very existence is due to breaking with the anti-democratic policies and practice - the lies, the smears - of the SWP - resort to those same methods against anarchism - or, lets be honest, just Class War?

Why write a long, cluttered academic article on Bakunin - whom I and most of my comrades do not bother to read - to smear anarchism - or should I say Class War?

Apparently we believe in "dictatorial dominance for the intelligensia, anti-intellectualism for the masses" - news to us comrades. As an attack on Bakunin it is I'm sure, correct and I/we would agree with 99% of it. Unfortunately this fine theoretical article is flawed in that it is pretending to be and concluding against anarchism - and Class War in particular. You know quite definitely that the class struggle anarchist movement in this country CWF, ACF, DAM, AWG agree very strongly with the sort of workers' democracy - power - state you talk of recently and not the elitism of Bakunin, Nacheav [Nechayev? - Ed] or Lenin. And on Bakuninism, there are many who would argue that Leninism/Bolshevism as in fact the worst of Marxism and Bakuninism combined. But you prefer to tar and find guilt by association than argue the differences between your platform and Class War Feds' or DAMs.

So what has got your back up comrades? Why do you lower yourselves to this level? Why do you accuse CWF of "throwing in a few fucks to disguise their dilettantism and lack of analysis" when you know this is pure shite?

I personally believe it is because CWF has achieved what you would like to have achieved. From the proud beginnings you sadly have come nowhere - in influence, members or paper sales. Yes, you have a good record on anti-fascism, but in building political organisation and influence you have failed.

And on the very ground that in Jan 1992 was all yours you wished to succeed CWF have prospered. CWF has begun to break through the decades of the leftist (and state) created distrust of people with politics. We, not you ironically, used the populist tactics of the SWP in the late 70s best in the 80s.

We, not you, have begun to show that working class people are political (and that incidentally being anti-intellectual does not mean being anti-educational) and will be interested in propaganda by and for people like them, about things that affect their lives.

It could have been you who created a mass audience. It looks more likely to be us in the 90s.

I'm sorry this reply is catty, but I and many others were pissed off no end by that sad article. Groups like Red Action and CWF should be coming together for discussion, support and action. We have much to teach each other and hope that this will come about. We do not however expect let alone appreciate ill-educated attacks from comrades. We hope however that it was the opinions of the author not of all Red Action.

Yours Glyn, personal capacity, East London Class War.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Throughout the 70's and early 80's if you wanted to know what was happening amongst Britain's neo-Nazis, **Searchlight** was indispensable. Under the editorship of the late Maurice Ludmer, it relentlessly exposed the Nazi ideology that lay behind the 'respectable' image that the then growing National Front cultivated. **Searchlight** operated on the principle of being part of the movement and providing the information without interfering, leaving the activists to decide. Today that policy has gone by the board. In stressing action by the state, and subordinating anti-fascist mobilisation at street level to the wooing of the centre ground of establishment politics, it seeks to distance itself from militant anti-fascism and anti-racism and marginalise and destabilise existing groups which choose not to follow its approach. It is trying to create a British version of the failed French **SOS Racisme**, in which racism is seen as the product of individuals rather than society. This has happened since the editorship of Gerry Gable.

For the past 5 years, PSC and others have complained of **Searchlight's** pro-Zionist stance. In 1982 **Searchlight** claimed that the PLO had invited the NF onto a march. It provided no evidence other than the NF's claims to that effect. It accused the PLO in Lebanon of training Euro-Nazis, yet before Gable's editorship, **Searchlight** had itself printed an article 'Euro-Nazis trained in Phalange Camps'. **Searchlight's** bias on the Middle East has shown up clearly in the coverage it has given to the antics of Patrick Harrington's 'Political Soldier' group of the NF. Adopting a populist approach, this group claimed to be separatists who respected other separatists including Black ones (there is nothing strange in this, indeed it was the basis of the collaboration between Zionism and anti-semitism historically). The NF tried to build links with Black, Green and Welsh Nationalist groups, with little success, and also approached Libya and Iran for money, which they obtained through fawning upon their governments. Libya later realised what they were up to and refused any more support. However, prior to that, **Searchlight** played up the Libyan connection out of all proportion. **Searchlight** had a cover showing pictures of Harrington, Black Muslim leader Farrakhan, Gaddafy and Khomeini, with the caption, 'The New Axis'. To cap that, the January 88 issue contained a diagram of international fascism, including boxes for 'Muslim Fundamentalists', 'Arab Terrorists' and 'Iran/Libya'. Meanwhile the US has bombed Tripoli, and sent its fleet into the Gulf. Borrowing Reagee's racist terminology, **Searchlight** described 1988 as 'Year of the Mad Dogs' over a large picture of Gaddafy.

Perhaps **Searchlight** would excuse this by saying that it only deals with states in so far as they foster and support organisations with a fascist or extreme right-wing ideology. However it has never covered the activities of the semi-fascist Tehiya (Renaissance) and Moledet (Transfer) parties in Israel. It has limited itself in recent years, to several brief articles on Meir Kahane's Kach - a safe option as all other parties in Israel also denounce them.

In coverage of the West German Republikaner and French Front Nationale parties is also partial. **Searchlight** omits to mention that they are pro-Israel that it is Arabs far more than Jews who are their main objects. In 1987, a dinner was given in honour of Le Pen, hosted by Jacques Torczyner, President of the World Union of General Zionists. Those attending were **"all of them leading members of the American Jewish Community, including Dr. Israel Singer, executive director of the World Jewish Congress....There are Zionist leaders who think that an anti-Arab goverment in France would necessarily be good for Israel, even if it were also anti-semitic...who would regard such anti-semitism as a bonus"** (Chaim Bermant Jewish Chronicle 4.9.87). The reaction of **Searchlight** was complete silence. Not a whisper.

Gable claims that he left the Communist Party in 1961, "because the party had begun to adopt an anti-Israeli line". The contrast with Maurice Ludmer, who left the CP in 1968 because of its lack of commitment to anti-fascist work, could not be clearer. Recently **Searchlight** has not shrunk from attacking other anti-fascists. When Patrick Herrington recently claimed that he wished to improve his relations with the Jewish community, Gable explained that this was a "cynical attempt...to attract the ultra-left who use anti-Zionism as a spokesman for their anti-semitism."

Whereas Maurice Ludmer was a trades union activist (the Left's successful candidate for President of Birmingham Trades Council), Gable has never been part of the wider movement. It is this, and his contempt for class politics, that helps explain **Searchlight's** political degeneration.

Anti-Fascist Action was formed in February 1985. Almost immediately a controversy was sparked over an anarchist group, Class War. CW were never popular on the left with their punk periphery. Their leadership was accused of racism, being ex-NFers, acting as police agent-provocateurs on demonstrations and jointly planning the Stop the City demonstrations with the NF as an anti-Jewish pogrom. CW were immediately suspended pending an investigation. When a Commission of inquiry reported, CW were exonerated but the damage had been done. AFA's 1988 AGM nearly broke up in turmoil. The Report stated that,

"Despite the leading role of Searchlight magazine in the affair, and despite many approaches to the magazine for evidence, the sum total of material from Searchlight was nil. We are bemused by Searchlight's role in this affair".

In the course of the inquiry, Gable had admitted to monitoring anarchists.

"Delegates representing millions of workers and students march to the Cenotaph, London 12 November 1989." Searchlight No.174 Dec 1989.

AFA's major campaign last year was against the Nazi rock **Blood and Honour** group in conjunction with the anti-racist Cable Street Beat (whom **Searchlight** have never acknowledged). AFA drove B&H from its West End shops and on May 27 an international Nazi rock concert was provented in Camden. **Searchlight** claimed the credit (and the Nazi's deposit money) but it actually refused to divulge the whereabouts of the gig to AFA because it wanted it to go ahead (so it could be infiltrated). AFA however obtained the information independently.

Long gone are the days of secret memos between Webster and Tyndall. Instead endless 'Recaps' about former fascists fill its pages. The May '88 issue was entitled "End of the Road for John Tyndall?" "John Tyndall's BNP is showing every sign of being an organisation on the verge of extinction". Fifteen months later, "Tyndall's BNP Nazis off the leash", it was telling a different story. Then there was the 50 year old exclusive about Mosley's collaboration with the Nazis and the alleged plot by a Tory MP to murder Gable. Private Eye paid the libel damages.

For the last 3 years AFA has organised a Rememberance Day March to the Cenotaph. This year it was decided to directly oppose the NF and coordinate with **Searchlight** who would organise their own march. **Searchlight** reneged on this agreement, refusing to publicise AFA's mobilisation. Its November editorial went further, charging that,

"In the past 4 years of anti-fascist Remembrance Day marches, the only regrettable feature has been the narrow and often sectarian nature of the event. This year Searchlight ...has broken that mould...we are marching alongside representatives of the TUC, The Union of Jewish Students...We are also pleased to welcome the Refugee Forum and LARF onto the march".

Their pleasure was premature. No Black groups marched with them. In previous years over 2,000 marched under AFA's sectarian banner, this year less than 150 gathered under **Searchlight's** broad umbrella, compared to the 700 who joined AFA. **Searchlight** even claimed that Harringtoe's NF was joining up with AFA on Rememberance Day. (Time Out 9 November).

Searchlight's love affair with the Union of Jewish Students started with the war Crimes campaign. UJS's primary role is to defend Israel and attack Palestinians. Its record inside the NUS is particularly appalling: opposing No Platform for Fascists, attacking the ANC and refusing to give any suppport to Jewish gays. For a Zionist group like UJS, anti-fascism is always secondary to its main purpose. Its Campaigns Officer, David Hermane, explained that,

"we have not joined the march in the past because of the hostility shown to us by the anti-Zionist left".

Last year UJS pulled out of a speaking tour with **Searchlight** mole Ray Hill, after objecting to an editorial in **Searchlight** that differentiated for the first time between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. Gerry Gable learned his lesson. Unfortunately he forgot that Zionist groups don't mobilise for anti-fascist marches.

Unless **Searchlight** returns to a non-interventionist role in the anti-fascist movement and takes a neutral view on the middle East, its credibility will continue to wither. Today, **Searchlight** represents bourgeois anti-fascism; those who wish to divorce anti-fascism from anti-racism, and anti-racism from anti-imperialism. The time is long overdue for a searchlight to be trained on **Searchlight**.

Tony Greenstein
(Tony Greenstein was a founder member of Brighton and Hove Anti-fascist Committee, secretary of Brighton ANL and member of the Steering Committee & Executive of AFA since 1986)

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

Dear Red Action
Here's some comments on your 'Anarchism and the Invisible Legions' article in RA 56.
First, if you're writing an article on anarchism, you're wasting your time concentrating on the failings or otherwise of Michael Bakunin - especially, as your author admits, when a lot of the quotes are taken before Bakunin was even an anarchist. Most 'Great Men' have feet of clay somewhere along the line, and this is as true of Marx and Engels as anyone else. The fact that Marx, for example, supported German domination over the Slavs, calling for "a decisive terror against the Slav peoples" (reply to Bakunin's "Appeal to the Slavs" 1849) and German victory over France in 1870 ("The French need a thrashing" - letter to Engels) does not make German imperialism an essential part of Marxism.
Bakunin was highly influential in his day - but anarchists, from 1870 to today, haven't blindly worshipped the ground he walked on. Anarchists are against 'leadership cults' and theorists/activists have to stand or fall on their merits alone.
For a historical article - and most of your article was based in the late 19th century - it would have been better to concentrate on the development of anarchism as a mass socialist movement. Some of the 'facts' (as your author puts it) that could have been taken into account include: the Haymarket Martyrs - Anarchist trade unionists hung in America during the struggle for an 8 hour day and one of the main reasons why Mayday is now Workers day; the development of mass, anarchist-influenced or based union movements (Anarcho-Syndicalism), not just in France (the CGT before WW1) and Spain (the CNT with over 1½ million members by 1938), but throughout much of Europe and Latin America - not to forget anarchist involvement in the industrial Workers of the World/Wobblies, in N. America, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere. Anarchists were active, at times playing a major role, in the Mexican Revolution (Ricardo Flores Magon and the PLM), the Russian Revolution (the factory committees, the insurrectionary Army of the Ukraine/Makhnovists), the occupation of the factories in Italy after the First World War and the physical force anti-fascism - both during the rise of the fascists (the Arditi del Popolo - peoples' anti-fascist militias) and after (assassination attempts on Mussolini, the Resistance etc). The fact that many Marxists prefer to ignore these and other events - or rewrite history to fit into their own sectarian viewpoint - doesn't make them any less true.
History aside, anarchist theory is a lot wider than the writings of a few 'great' men and women - Kropotkin, Malatesta, Emma Goldman, as well as Bakunin and others. Theory is born through practice, as well as action guided by theory. As important as any major books and the real strength of any anarchist movement, are the aims and aspirations of the great mass of anonymous and not-so-anonymous militants - the union congresses and resolutions, the anarchist press and pamphlets, the reality of anarchist agitation, education and organising. Anarchists like Sacco and Vanzetti, for example, might not have been the best-spoken or educated around, but they knew what they were fighting for (and it wasn't an 'invisible anarchist dictatorship') and were murdered as a result.
At the very least, anyone who talks about 'anarchist theory' today, without taking account of the reality of the Spanish Revolution of 1936 - when mainly anarcho-syndicalist workers and peasants seized the land and factories and laid the beginnings of a libertarian socialist society, as well as fighting fascism arms in hand - can't be serious. It's like quoting Lenin's book 'State and Revolution' - while ignoring the Bolsheviks' crushing of all independent workers and peasant organisations, the Kronstadt revolt, the rise of Stalin etc.
Moving on, you say that anarchism "is hostile to Marxism and revolutionary socialism". The first bit is true, if by Marxism you mean mainstream Marxism - the Social Democratic movement before WW1 (Labour Party type reformists) and the Marxism-Leninism after (elitist, dictatorial - as you now apparently agree). When it comes to minority currents within Marxism - Council Communism -'for the class not the party' - it's nowhere near as clear-cut. The aim of anarchism, after all, is Libertarian Communism, socialism from below.
As far as Bakunin and Marx goes, the in-fighting in the First International was nowhere near as one-sided as you make out and even some Marxists admit this. The 1871 London Conference for instance and the 1871 Hague Congress (which effectively destroyed the International) were little more than stage-managed set-ups controlled by Marx.
Bakunin's lust for absolute power - to be a "secret chief' over an 'invisible dictatorship' - isn't necessarily true either. I've read lots of versions of this and it all depends on who you read and how you interpret what he meant. Any such comments of his have to be seen in the light of his other writings - on the need for workers' self-organisation, socialist federalism and solidarity, strike action and insurrection - i.e. anarcho-syndicalism in all but name. And even if the most paranoid accusations against him were true, its irrelevant to today - just as its been irrelevant over the last 100 years.
If you want to find out "what Bakunin really meant" - or even what he wrote that helped shape and influence anarchism - you'd do far better to read collections of his works, rather than the biased writings of dead Marxists. Its easy to take quotes out of context to try to prove anything, especially when such articles were written as a part of a propaganda war, from Marx onwards.
I'll end here. The above is to put the record straight. This is 1990 not 1936. If we try to learn from the past it's to solve the future. I'd agree with most of the last bit of your article - along with most other Red Action comments on the Left. We need a serious revolutionary movement in this country. Marxist-Leninism is dead. Hippy liberalism - sometimes masquerading as 'anarchism' - is a joke. We need a class movement forged through struggle - one that speaks for today and has the drive and determination needed to win.
Finally, even if Red Action and anarchists don't see eye-to-eye on all issues, there are large areas of common ground. Anti-fascism is an obvious one.
Yours,
Paul.

Liverpool Direct Action.

...whose Peasant army having just defeated the White army in the Crimea were betrayed by Lenin and executed by the Bolsheviks.

REPLY

Thank you for your letter and for the time and effort you spent outlining your arguments. Its balanced approach and general lack of hysteria makes a refreshing change and merits a similar response.
It is certainly true that genuine anarchists and Red Action have many areas of agreement, possibly more than you imagine. Certainly with regard to your own organisation DAM, an increasing and fruitful collaboration in the anti-fascist arena, though up to now predominantly in the London area, along with the Trotskyite group Workers Power has seen us make advances in this area hitherto regarded as impossible. Right from the very beginning a central principle was to regard all initiatives from whatever quarter in a non-sectarian manner.
For instance in 1986 less than one year after helping found Anti-Fascist Action, Red Action delegates led a walk-out of AFA's conference in Manchester in protest at an obvious smear campaign mounted by Searchlight among others against the anarchist group Class War. Not only did we understand that the demagogury was the antithesis of the correct approach to building any movement but in all probability it would prove to be the thin end of the wedge. What they could do against Class War today they could employ against RA tomorrow. Less than 18 months later, a smear campaign was initiated by a different clique to suspend RA - incidentally the 6 month inquiry into both the allegations made against Class War and similar allegations made against ourselves (racism etc) proved to be without foundation.
So having established our impeccable credentials so to speak, I feel free to correct a misunderstanding central to your argument. The article in question, "Anarchism and the invisible legions" (RA no 56), was not intended as a potted history of anarchists in action and certainly not an attack on all anarchists per se.
It came about as a result of investigative articles in the previous issues of RA (nos. 53-55) on questions of dictatorship versus democracy specifically with regard to the Bolshevik interpretation of Marx's famous phrase "the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" which for many exposed or highlighted the dubious parentage of that curious hybrid known as Marxism-Leninism.
As many still regard the imagined libertarianism of Bakunin and Proudhon as the only possible alternative to Marx and Engels it was necessary to lay open for scrutiny the real theoretical basis of anarchism and also of course lay open for scrutiny the motives real or illusory of the theoreticians themselves.
As your absurd allegation that Marx was in reality a closet German imperialist only illustrates that today the monumental mountain of myths and misunderstandings critical and laudatory, whether manufactured or promoted by malevolent mischief makers like Bakunin or not, has now reached such proportions that 'Marxist' as a descriptive term in 1990 is without value and almost devoid of meaning. Lack of space does not permit a comprehensive reply but I assume your opinions are based on a polemic issued by Bakunin with his usual gay abandon to slander and his delightful disregard for the demands of evidence, had charged that the Marxists want the proletariat to dominate "the common peasant folk" and therefore want the "Germans" to dominate the Slavs.
For all of Marx and Engels writings on the peasant question be it in France, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Russia, Italy etc their support for any national movement thereof was based on this development hastening the process of the proletarian revolution internationally. As Marx wrote of the Polish peasant uprising against Russian ambitions,
"The Cracow revolution has given a glorious example to the whole of Europe by identifying the cause of the nation with the cause of democracy and the liberation of the oppressed class".
This position applied to all Slavdom.
"The merit of the Poles lies in the fact that they were the first to recognise and popularise agrarian democracy as the sole possible forms of liberation for all slavic nations" (Engels)
As your support for anarchism appears to be based on a negative anti-Marxism perhaps you would do better to read Marx's works than to rely on the biased writings of dead anarchists!
However if there is some evidence of imperialist leanings among revolutionary leaders of the day then again on the issue of dictatorship and democracy it is more profitable to look closer to your ideological home. In 1862 Bakunin made this appeal to the Russian Czar to make the revolution at the head of the people:
"We would prefer to follow Romanoff , if Romanoff could and would transform himself from a Petersburg (ie urban and westernised) into a peasant Czar".
For Bakunin this was not a one off nor was he by any means unique. Proudhon, the 'father of anarchism' looked at one time or another to some ruling despot who as a one-man saviour/dictator would bring the revolution: in 1852 he wrote a whole book extolling the Emperor Louis Bonaparte as the bearer of revolution, later Jerome Bonaparte, finally Czar Alexander II. ("Do not forget that the despotism of the Czar is necessary to any civilisation.")
Like Bakunin, Proudhon is revered as a great libertarian because of his industrious use of the word liberty with a big 'L' and constant talk of "revolution from below". You may indeed be willing to regard his Hitlerite form of anti-semitism (the Jew is the enemy of humankind, it is necessary to send his race back to Asia or exterminate it) as an irrelevance. Or his principled racism in general (he thought it was right to keep blacks in slavery since they were the lowest of the inferior races), or his glorification of war for its own sake (in the exact manner of Mussolini) or his view that women had no rights,
"I deny her every political right and very initiative, for women,virtue lies solely in marriage,motherhood and domestic duties."
But as you agree he "helped shape and influence your movement" can you also regard as irrelevant, or does it depend on how you interpret it, his violent opposition not only to trade unionism and the right to strike (even supporting police strike breaking) but to any and every idea of the right to vote, universal sufferage or the very idea of constitutions, ("All of this democracy disgusts me, what I would not give to sail into this mob with my clenched fists"). His notes for the ideal society notably include suppression for all other groups; any public meetings of more than 20, any free press or elections. In the same notes he also looks forward to a "general inquisition" and the condemnation of several million people to forced labour once the revolution is made.
What about the usual illusions about anarchist libertarianism? Was he completely insincere about his professed love of liberty? Not at all! It is only necessary to understand what anarchist liberty means. The central principle meant as he explained,
"that any man who cannot do what he wants has the right to revolt against the government even if the government were everyone else"
Contrary to your central contention anarchism is not concerned with the creation of democratic control from below, only with the destruction of "authority" over the individual. This includes the most extremely democratic regulation of society that it is possible to imagine. Even if this were possible a real anarchist could not support it. Anarchists do not advocate political freedom, what they advocate is freedom from politics. Anarchism is on principle fiercely anti-democratic since as ideally democratic structure is still authority. Anarchism and anarchists who are fronst with all this talk about 'something' from below, reject this goal.
Certainly it is true that Sacco and Vanzetti did not die for the (Bakuninist concept) of an invisible Dictatorship. But then it could be said with equal validity that neither did those working class who fought on the side of the Stalinist counter-revolutionaries in the Spanish Civil War intend that their efforts and sacrifice would facilitate the triumph of the fascist Franco. The party ideologists pointed out the 'enemy' and as loyal members of the party it was in that direction that they pointed their guns.
Were they as individuals any more or less culpable than the members of the anarcho-syndicalist unions of the CNT, controlled incidentally by a highly centralised FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation) who in 1934 refused to support a general strike called by the UGT and workers alliances? It was argued in true anarchist fashion that all governments were equally bad and despite severe provocations the current government of Lerroux was no worse than the rest. When armed struggle broke out the CNT the CNT refused with the honourable exception of the CNT regions in Asturias to join with republicans and socialists in the struggle with Gil Robles. The backbone of the insurrection was broken by the refusal of the CNT railroad workers to strike, which enabled the right-wing forces to transport goods and ammunition and troops. Nevertheless the rebellion lasted 15 days and cost well over 3,000 workers' lives. Like the working class Stalinists these railway workers were both prisoners and victims of a deeply flawed ideology. The anarchists who rightfully take their place in the roll of honour of the Spanish Civil War do so not because of their attachment to anarchism but in spite of it.
The anarchists who fought hardest and with the most clarity, confidence and conviction were not those who remained loyal to doctrinaire anarchism but those like Durrutti and later the Friends of Durrutti who deviated from it. They denounced the collaboration and bureaucracy of the CNT, developed close links with the left wing of the workers' party the POUM, explicitly called for democratic organs of power, Juntas or workers' councils in the overthrow of capitalism, and made a conscious break with the anti-statism of traditional anarchism.
Indeed of all the groupings on the left in the Civil War they emerge with most credit, for if they did in the confusion of betrayals, denunciations and counter-accusations, not arrive on the right side first, they arrived a close second - but they always arrived. A true inspiration, our politics would have put us on their side - how about yours? To conclude, Red Action did not learn its politics from Marx, we learned our politics from practice. Indeed the theoretical conclusions central to our existence, the importance of class composition, internal democracy and non-sectarianism - ingredients vital to socialism from below - were reached before we belatedly realised the value to all workers of the writings of Marx and Engels. Used properly as they were always intended to be used as a practical guide to working class (revolutionary) action.
This is 1990 not 1936 and those who do not learn from the past are condemned to repeat the same mistakes in the future. If the Stalinist nightmare has ended for the workers of Eastern Europe, anarchism promises no new vision of the future, either for them or us, only further expensive hallucinations induced by the prescriptive writings of political quacks like Proudhon and Bakunin.
Yours fraternally,
Joe Reilly

"The CNT was utterly devoid of revolutionary theory we did not have a concrete programme we did not know where we were going.We had lyricism a plenty;but when all is said and done we did not know what to do with our masses of workers." Friends of Durutti.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

"No more taxes? Read my lips. Im a lying bastard".

According to its own touts, capitalism has entered something of a golden age. The chaos and anarchy of the market evident to the eye of commonsense in unemployment, waste and exploitation is regarded by the apologists of capitalism to operate with a kind of harmonious logic in some mysterious dimension of its own. Whereas these bourgeois politicians and economists claim that any kind of interference with market forces is unnatural and catastrophic, it is equally evident from the briefest equaintance with the actual workings of capitalism that without the constant intervention of governments, state industries and subsidies, central banks etc in the form of perpetual damage limitation exercises, the chaos inherent in the dynamics of the market

"How did it happen George?"

would quickly bring catastrophe to any economy that seriously abandoned the necessary forms of control.

The current state of the US economy, ironically the home of the most rabid forms of bourgeois economics, provides an object lesson. The US economy, though the most powerful in the world, is also the world's largest debtor: it buys far more than it sells so that other countries in one form or another, have to provide credit. To keep the American economy in gear, Reagan had to spend massively on defence thus providing guaranteed profits to the private sector with public sector money, which would otherwise go bust. To do this without directly raising taxes in America, he had to borrow massively, mostly Japanese money. This means that not only the country as a whole but also the government itself is massively in debt, spending far more ($200 billion more) than it raises in taxes and other forms of revenue, being caught between the need for government spending to keep the economy moving and the dogma that raising taxes to do it is harmful. To cut the budget deficit means that with the government spending less, firms will find it more difficult to survive and the US will tip into a recession. To counter this, interest rates would have to be cut, making it cheaper for firms to borrow money. But interest rates have to remain high to attract the foreign money with which to bridge the gap between what America inc buys and sells.

Bush came to power with the notorious "read my lips" promise that there would be no new taxes. Taxes and government spending interfere with the workings of the market and that is supposed to be bad. Bush has now come to terms with the realities of the situation and recognised that without strong government intervention, a severe recession is inevitable. So he now says, there have to be new taxes after all.

In part this is a direct result of what is being termed "the biggest financial crisis of the century" - the Savings and Loans collapse. **Already estimates of the cost to the american tax payer are up to $500 billion, and rising. Put another way, that's over $2,000 for every man, woman and child in America.** Estimates put the cost to the economy well above that of the Vietnam war. In America Building Societies are known as Savings and Loans, or 'Thrifts'. These are currently going bust all over the place and to avoid bankruptcies all through the economy, the government is picking up the bill. How did it happen?

During the slump in the early 30s, the precarious situation of American banks caused a run on funds which brought down 4,000 banks throughout the US in a single year. **Since then, banks have been mistrusted to an extent to that forced the government to impose strict regulation, entirely contrary to the myth and ideology of the free marketeers.** S & Ls worked fine until the 70s, when Congress began de-regulating them, i.e. allowing them to follow the market wherever it might lead. When Reagan came to power, he de-regulated more; and the speculators, the risk-takers beloved in the folklore of capitalist economics, moved in. A text-book free-market developed as S & Ls were used to fund property-market speculation on the back of the oil boom in the southern states during the early eighties. Whole mini-cities were built, fortunes were made, until people began to realise that no-one actually wanted or could afford to buy all the new office blocks, hotels etc that had been built at the height of the boom. Massive economic resources had been poured into unproductive investments (the buildings no-one wanted to live or work in) rather than into areas of the economy which needed them - which in part accounts for the emergence of recession in the US today.

Speculation had taken place on the assumption, enshrined in the doctrines of the free-market ideologists, that there are no obstacles to economic growth, that markets impose their own discipline and cannot over-supply etc. **In short, an enormous speculative bubble developed and burst precisely as the boom and slump mechanism described by Marx over a hundred years ago predicts.** The greatest fear of all is that the sudden exposure of the S & Ls may extend to banks, insurance companies and pension funds which also invested heavily in real estate during the eighties. If that happened the entire economy of the US would literally collapse. That's why the government is not saying, let the markets sort out their own mess. **Whatever they say for public consumption, the people who run the US economy know in practice that the dynamics of capitalist development require constant intervention on a massive scale if they are not to lead to complete catastrophe.** It is strange to relate that the two countries that took free-market theories and deregulation seriously, the US and Britain should also be the two on the edge of recession and facing enormous deficits in their balance of payments i.e. the two economies from which people are increasingly choosing not to buy in the 'free' world market. Productivity in Germany and Japan, both statist economies at home and free-marketeers abroad, is rising at rates far higher than those in the US or Britain. With capitalist symbols such as Donald Trump on their way to the bankruptcy courts, expect a new school of bourgeois economics to emerge soon, acknowledging that while the market might move in mysterious ways, it is not the god of Eighties capitalist triumphalism.

THE VOICE OF REASON

Remember the response of the R.C.P. when they were asked to sponsor I.R.S.P. prisoners?It went something along the lines of "collecting money for prisoners is charity work",their response was much the same when they were asked about collections for the miners during the strike.Yet during a trip to Derry some time ago,I came across an appeal in a local paper from the I.F.M. asking for money for the Holloway Rd 30.Presumably collecting money for oppressed people is "charity work",yet collecting from them is perfectly acceptable practise for revolutionaries.Funny old world,isn't it???!!

Recentley Red Action were invited by a group called 'THE LENINIST' to condem the leaders of The Communist Party for selling off the property of the party to the highest bidder.'THE LENINIST' naturelly outraged decided that.....

opportunism!

We cannot allow this to pass without protest. That is why supporters of the Communist Party of Great Britain (*The Leninist*) staged an occupation of 16, St John Street - now sold - on July 27. Although it is the HQ of the Euro organisation, the building was purchased only through a generation of communist work and self sacrifice. It also contains the Party's records and archives - the 'family silver' - which are likewise being sold off to finance opportunism. We promise that after the revolution all those who have taken part in this crime, both selling and buying, will pay for it).

After six hours, having managed to mobilise some 30 of their supporters (who were given Dutch courage by being tanked up on beer and gin), Euro functionaries Ian MacKay and Martin Jacques formally threatened, in the presence of a large police squad, to stage a violent incident. Although our comrades made it perfectly clear that their occupation would cause no damage to premises, equipment or people, under bourgeois law any resistance they offered would have resulted in arrest and criminal proceedings. In the face of this our comrades reluctantly decided to stage a disciplined retreat. Showing their fighting spirit, they withdrew singing *The Internationale*

National Committee.
CPGB(The Leninist),July 29 1990

Yeah, well, while we thankfully have even less in common with these old 'Stalinist' dribblers than they have, this was not exactly the 'storming of the Winter Palace' was it? Sounded more like the type of operation that might have been mounted by the late lamented 'Wolfy Smith' and the Tooting Popular Front.

"POWER TO THE PEOPLE"
EDITORIAL.

JOIN RED ACTION

Red Action is an organisation formed by working class people to work for the overthrowing of the Capitalist Monarchy. Membership is open to all who accept our political principles and pay a weekly subscription. Every member has an equal voice in all Red Action policy and decisions.

If you support our aims and are not with us become a member, you can become a supporting member. This does not entitle you to vote, but you will receive, 1. A free subscription to the Newspaper.

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3) Satisfaction of any Red Action activities in your area.

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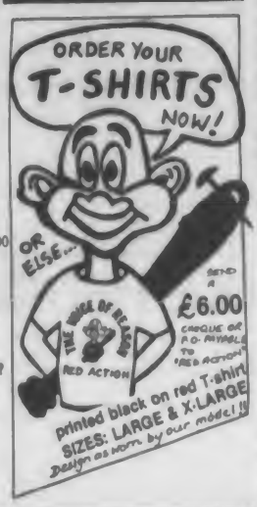

THE BAILIFFS ARE COMING!

The fight against the Poll Tax is gaining a new momentum throughout the country. With the issuing of summonses to enable the councils to obtain liability orders, non-payers are being moved from a relatively passive position of withholding money and staging sporadic demonstrations against the tax, into a stage in which they are actively opposing the councils in the courts (their home ground) and in the community (our home ground). Although any movement of the scope and character of the Anti-Poll Tax Union movement can expect to receive a number of setbacks it is still the case that their problems are far greater than those that we face.

In the courts, the council have a very limited amount of time in which to obtain the liability orders they need in order to impose sanctions on non-payers. In a recent local case a man succeeded in prolonging his defence for 2½ hours! Given that councils generally have no more than a few days or afternoons to hear thousands of cases, it is obvious that they have a tough job on their hands if local Anti-poll Tax Unions organise sufficient people to turn up in person and prevent their cases from being rubber-stamped.

Where councils do obtain liability orders, they can proceed to deduct money from wages or income support (not pensions or other types of benefit). There are signs that unions are beginning to take a stand of behalf of their members threatened with wage arrestment. It is vital that unions are pressured in this way to protect the interests of their members. The council's other option, the one they are currently most likely to adopt, is to send in the bailiffs. Anti-Poll Tax Unions have a vital role to play here in countering the intimidatory effect that the threat of the bailiffs has for many people. There are in fact only 1,000 bailiffs in England and Wales, so they are liable to find their resources considerably over-stretched. And unlike Scotland, bailiffs here do not have any power to force entry into a person's home in **any** circumstances. If you do not let them in, they cannot get in, no matter how many times they may return. **Nonetheless where bailiffs are being used, it must be emphasised that these people are no better than thieves and muggers and must be treated by activists and the community as such.** When they go about their business of harassing and intimidating working class people, they must be made to know that the harassment and intimidation is not going to be one way. All activists should be organising now in their own areas to ensure that this is the case. Many people who have to this point merely been in sympathy with the Anti-Poll Tax movement will be willing to become more actively involved as they see direct assaults on their neighbours, relatives and friends homes being carried on in front of them. The potential to build active resistence to these contemptible collaborators of the Thatcher government and to build popular support for bailiff-busting activites and consequently the work and aims of the Anti-poll Tax movement generally, is enormous.

Beyond that, anti-poll tax activists can alert their communities to the inevitable cuts in services and jobs if the poll tax continues in place. For if the poll tax continues even in a ramshackle and crippled form, it remains a perfect vehicle for achieving the central purpose of the government in introducing it - the destruction of local government autonomy and services. It has to be realised that it is not the purpose of the government to make local government work more effectively or more cheaply. **It is their purpose to destroy the services that the councils at present provide - and this can be achieved whether or not the Poll Tax proves 'workable' in the terms of local authority Finance Officers.** If the poll tax did prove 'workable' (say a 90-95% collection rate), it is designed to force local authorities in successive years to either put up the poll tax to unrealistic and unpopular levels as the government steadily reduces the amount contributed to local finance from central funds, or, as will be the case, to cut local services and jobs to the point where they virtually cease to exist. But on the other hand, if local authorities get a proportion of the money they need (say 80 or even 90%), but are unable to collect the rest, which councils themselves would regard as proof of its being 'unworkable', there is a great danger that they will still be compelled by central government to drastically reduce the level of services and jobs they provide. Either way, the result will be much the same. The only option open to ordinary people in this country if they wish to maintain the system of local authority education, housing and welfare that most of us have grown up with, **is to defeat the poll tax decisively in the shortest possible time.** That means making sure that they don't get the money and that councils grind to a total halt forcing this government or the next one to introduce an alternative system of local finance immediately. The poll tax is the most ambitious and oppressive measure the Tories have yet passed. It has not unexpectedly also aroused the most widespread and organised opposition. We must do our utmost to ensure that this opposition is as effectively organised as possible at every stage. **WE'RE NOT PAYING!!**

Bailiffs being confronted on their own door-step by anti poll tax protestors,a neat role reversal .The bailiff is the slimy looking bastard on the right.

THE MIDNIGHT KNOCK

I recently took the opportunity to attend a meeting organised by Troops Out in London. Amongst the many ex-soldiers who had served in N. Ireland who spoke at the meeting was ex-Army intelligence officer Captain Fred Holroyd, author of the book, "War Without Dishonour".

What makes Holroyd such an engaging and credible speaker is that he is one of the establishment's own, who believes in the gallant traditions of the British Army and who places his political aspirations in the traditional Tory party cleansed of the evils of Thatcherism.

He was very keen to play up the age-old 'conspiracy theory' except that he pinpointed those most likely to subvert democracy as those at the centre of the establishment. He cited many examples of what he called "the biggest threat to democracy" such as the fact that the whole of M15's 'F' branch has been turned from watching the activities of the Soviets to watching the British left and TU movement. He spoke of an increasing number of army officers who had confided in him that they were deeply worried that the army was becoming far too political, and that many of these officers and policeman had called at his house in the middle of the night with issues that they felt should be exposed in the public interest but were too afraid to do so themselves because they were frightened that they'd suffer the same fate as Holroyd himself. Holroyd also explained some of the more subtle ways that increased surveillance of the public was creeping in. For example, the Neighbourhood Watch scheme has nothing to do with guarding neighbours' houses from burglary etc and everything to do with placing a spy on every street that would provide a steady flow of low-grade info and gossip to the Special Branch that could be used at a later date against those who become its political opponents.

He also spoke about his involvement in the dirty tricks department while based in N. Ireland and explained many of the ways that outrages are committed and covered up in the name of the British public. One such example was that young boys in Childrens Homes in N. Ireland who had received anal injuries while being abused by British N. Ireland ministers were sent to Musgrave Park Military Hospital so that they could be treated under the Official Secrets Act.

But the example he gave that has the most relevance to the main part of this article, concerned the activities of the SAS. He said that many of the SAS soldiers who had been injured while engaging the IRA in the border areas of N. Ireland and the 26 counties were paid off to keep quiet so that many incidents could be covered up. Now, with their injuries getting worse and the money running out, Holroyd claimed that a number of them were now prepared to 'blow the gaff'. Read on.....

TO THE RESCUE!

For about 18 months now the religious bigots of the extreme anti-abortion group, Operation Rescue, have been organising pickets outside abortion clinics around the country.

Originated in the USA by a 'born again' Christian, Terry Randell, their extreme actions against clinics, staff, and most disturbingly, patients, have included verbal harassment, intimidation, occupations of clinics and physical attacks. Rescue in the USA has also been implicated in the firebombings of clinics.

Operation Rescue in Britain was established by a lunatic Roman Catholic priest from Scotland, James Morrow. Last year its membership was boosted with the arrival of 24 American and Canadian activists some of whom have since moved on into Europe in an attempt to broaden Rescue's campaign. The 24 who arrived in the country were specially chosen by Rescue's hierarchy due to bail conditions and criminal records hanging over their heads as a result of their actions. If they had remained in America or Canada they would have definitely faced imprisonment, some possibly receiving long sentences.

Morrow claims that here in Britain, Rescue are "committed to non-violent direct action" which reeks of sheer hypocrisy. Although they have yet to carry out firebombings of clinics some of their tactics have been heavily influenced by their American counterparts. They frequently carry out blockades of clinics where they verbally abuse women entering using emotive phrases such as "murderer", "you feed your children with the blood of dead babies" and "mummy don't kill me", obviously causing great distress for the women who have made a personal choice to have an abortion. Glossy leaflets containing colour 'horror' pictures of aborted foetuses are held aloft and are given out at the clinic's entrance in an attempt to make the woman feel guilty about her decision. Although they are quick to deny it, Morrow's Rescue activists have also carried out physical assaults on women and staff of clinics in attempts to occupy them. Morrow himself was arrested recently along with Rescue activist Morris Lewes (who has served a 6 week sentence in Strangeways) in Liverpool for attacking 2 nurses and a pregnant woman. They are also prepared to drag women off the operating table whilst an abortion is taking place which they claim would not be a violent act and which would not harm the woman.

One clinic which Rescue regularly picket is the Raleigh Nursing Home in Brixton. Every Saturday morning a group of Rescue activists varying in numbers from 2 to 15 converge on the clinic and begin to "pray for the souls of dead babies". At first sight a group of religious nutters kneeling down on the pavement clutching their rosary beads hardly seems to be a threat or cause for concern. This however, is far from reality. When they've been given half a chance they have handed out leaflets, verbally abused women and one activist, Vincent Grimes, has repeatedly been caught lurking in the grounds waiting for women entering the clinic. In any case, their very presence is extremely distressing for women and an infringment on their right to have an abortion.

In Brixton the rescue pickets have met continuous militant resistance to their presence. At first those opposing Rescue had already taken position and despite attempts to move them on no real success could be foreseen. Ideally there should

R.C. Priest James Morrow.

be no-one outside the clinic at all so an obvious step was to try and stop Rescue reaching the clinic instead of turning up when they were already there. Members of Red Action, Direct Action Movement, Workers Power, individuals from the locality and, for the past few weeks, the Communist party, have been turning out at the most 'ungodly' hour of 7 am each Saturday, just before Rescue descend on the clinic. Before they get to the clinic they are confronted and an attempt is made to stop them getting any further by forcing them around corners or on to the other side of the road whereupon they decide to play with the traffic! On one occasion we managed to delay Rescue from reaching the clinic for about ½ an hour using these tactics and it would have been longer if one of them hadn't broken away and phoned the police. That day Morrow was amongst their numbers and it is believed that they were planning to attack and occupy the clinic.

It is doubtful whether Rescue have ever met opposition in this form and it has been reported back to us that Rescue activists around the country think that a 'riot' occurs every Saturday morning in Brixton on the route they take to the clinic. It is certainly true that some Rescue activists have turned up for a couple of weeks, seen the opposition, and haven't been seen at the clinic again. Again, they deny having any links with extreme right-wing organisations but on one occasion 2 'heavies' turned up, presumably to protect the rescue activists from the opposition who we identified as being from Patrick Harrington's Third way organisation (ex National Front Political Soldiers). This did not come as any surprise to us as in America, Rescue have been infiltrated by fascists including the Ku Klux Klan.

We have met a degree of criticism, particularly from the SWP, of our tactics because of the often physical nature of the confrontations. The SWP believe that the best strategy to use would be to build up support through local trade unions, work places and the community with a view to mobilising an even larger counter demonstration picket against rescue. However, what real good would this action do? I sincerely doubt if it would stop Rescue turning up. In Stockport these tactics were adopted to no real positive effect - Rescue still picket the clinic, the SWP still picket Rescue. Who wins? Rescue do because they still retain their presence outside the clinic. At an SWP branch meeting one member suggested that Rescue should be moved on to the opposite side of the road while the counter-demonstration stand outside the clinic! This is an absolutely ludicrous idea and it just goes to show that the SWP have moved away from being a revolutionary party. It must be stressed again that ideally **no-one** should be outside the clinic and that includes anti-abortionists and pro-abortionists.

At a recent public meeting which was attended by a variety of groups on the left and individuals, there was some discussion on how to proceed with the campaign against Rescue. A march through Brixton was suggested and it is a way of drawing the attention of the public to the problem. However we believe a 2 avenue approach is the best way forward, using the media, public meetings and demonstrations whilst continuing the more physical method of trying to stop them getting to the clinic. This strategy worked well last year in AFA's campaign against fascist shops in London's West End and could have positive results in the fight against Rescue. The people who have been opposing Rescue in Brixton have launched the Clinic Defence Campaign. If anyone wishes to contact the CDC or if anyone has any information about Rescue in their area, write to the Clinic Defence Campaign c/o the Red Action BM Box no.

The 'quality' of propaganda produced by the 'Pro-Life' bigots.

DEATHSQUAD AMBUSHED

It has been reported in the British press that 2 members of the 1st Battalion Royal Green Jackets, Darren Parfitt (22) and Richard Donkin (19) died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds at their base at Mercer Barracks, Osnabruck, W. Germany on 5th and 6 th April.

Strange you would think, except for the fact that on Saturday March 24th the IRA claimed that they had shot dead 2 undercover British officers in Coppagh village, N. Ireland, a claim flatly denied by the British authorities. The connection? This has come hot on the heels of an admission by former Parachute Battalion commander Brigadier Pater Morton, in his recently released book, that the death of an army private in South Armagh in 1978 by an IRA landmine was not disclosed. This has only served to confirm publicly what Republicans and many other followers of Irish affairs have always stated as fact, that the deaths of British soldiers (and especially the deaths of undercover operatives, the SAS etc) at the hands of the IRA are often covered up by claiming that they were the victims of car crashes or accidents while stationed in Germany. The IRA in Co. Tyrone have turned what appears to be a large scale operation to murder their volunteers completely on its head, killing 2 undercover troops and delivering a crushing blow to army morale in the 6 counties. Despite repeated denials by the authorities that there were any fatalities and an elaborate cover-up plan being put into action, many local people in the village have approached reporters and recounted stories that have corroborated the IRA's version of events.

The IRA have stated that the killings were the culmination of a 3 week long operation which had begun when members of an IRA unit who had taken an XR3i for use in a future operation felt that the car was under surveillance and that in fact it was probably bugged. The IRA in turn put a large scale surveillance operation into practice and it came to light that there were 8 cars of 2 man undercover teams in the area. When this was revealed the IRA set about planning how to 'take out' at least one of these teams. The arrival of DMSU detachments into the area pointed to the fact that the army was about to excute a number of IRA personnel in a 'shoot to kill' type massacre. The IRA in turn deployed 14 of their volunteers in the area and sent out a number of decoy vehicles in a game of cat and mouse with the army. One of the military vehicles was eventually lured into the area of the XR3i which had been hidden. The decoy vehicle slipped away and was lost by the army vehicle (a Volkswagen Passat) which then circled the village. As it drove out of the village it was tailed by 3 IRA volunteers armed with assault rifles in the XR3i. As they cleared the last of the houses, one of the volunteers emerged through the sun roof and opened fire, killing the soldier in the passenger seat and wounding the driver, causing their car to crash. The volunteers then pulled alongside the army vehicle and continued to fire into it. However, unknown to the IRA, other British units had dug in previously and had now opened fire; realising the situation they were in the volunteers made good their gateway. Heavy fire was still being directed at the abandoned XR3i observed by local people and IRA volunteers positioned in the village. Minutes after the IRA unit had withdrawn, 2 military cars showed up at the scene and immediately came under fire from their own personnel, wounding one of them. Less than a minute later further army units showed up and the shooting at last stopped. The troops had been shooting wildly for a full 5 minutes at both nothing and each other.

A cordon was thrown around a five mile radius, but all the volunteers escaped. Local people were taunted, "two of your provo bastards are lying dead up there on the street" by a soldier who had obviously not realised the true outcome of the gun battle! The immediate area was sealed off for 4 hours.

A number of local people have claimed to have seen the 2 cars speeding through the village and hearing continued gunfire. Quoted in the Irish News one of them had watched from Cappagh's hill, 100 yards away, and said, "no doubt about it, there were lifeless bodies lying at the scene for some considerable time". At night, another man watched the scene, made visible by large army floodlights through a pair of binoculars and stated that, after the car was towed from the ditch he saw a soldier stagger "from side to side" apparently distraught at "whatever he had seen". "I could see it with the big lights" he said.

"He went down on his hands and knees with his head in his hands and they just left him alone for a while. Everybody around here is certain that soldiers were killed and that it's been hushed up for some reason". Mr Ed Moloney of the Sunday Tribune and the first of the media to question the army's version of events, said, "What is clear is that there is a direct conflict between what eyewitnesses say what happened and the official account". In the Irish Times report, the RUC denied that anybody had either been killed or wounded, but have since conceded that a "routine unmarked vehicle came under fire in the village of Coppagh. There were injuries but no fatalities."

To Red Action the truth is quite clear, that the IRA have executed undercover British troops and that the authorities have put their lie machine into top gear to protect the mythical reputation of the SAS as invincible supermen. So here's a tip next time there are reports of a gun battle in the countryside of N. Ireland that is not spread over the tabloids the next day with gloating headlines like 'SAS heroes kill IRA murderers'; check the small print for mysterious army hang-gliding fatalities abroad!!!

S.F. Councillor Martin McCaughey has since resigned, following unfounded media speculation which has linked his name to the ambush of SAS in Cappagh. -AP/RN, 16.8.90.

All signed articles are that persons own view, and may not necessarily reflect Red Action decided policy.